

International Studies Summer Institutes for Teachers

"Venezuela: Behind the Headlines"

Education, Politics, History, Culture and Economics

June 29 - July 10, 2008

Organized by FACDIS

The West Virginia Consortium for Faculty and Course Development in International Studies

APPLICATION DEADLINE: MARCH 3, 2008

This summer program will take participants on an eleven-day tour of Venezuela. Participants will acquire resources relating to the teaching of history, politics, education, culture and, economics, and, of course, Spanish. Visits will be made to Caracas, Barquisimeto, Sanare, and the Cloud Forest of Yacambu in the Andes. Participants will also have the opportunity to learn some rudimentary Spanish, or to improve their existing language skills.

The tour will be lead by Charles Hardy. A native of Cheyenne, Wyoming, Charlie is a former Catholic priest who has lived in Venezuela for over twenty years. He spent eight of those years living in a pressed-cardboard and tin shack in a Caracas barrio. He is author of *Cowboy in Caracas, A North American's Memoir of Venezuela's Democratic Revolution*, published in April 2007 by Curbstone Press. His personal blog is <http://www.cowboyincaracas.com>, and is a frequent contributor to www.venezuelanalysis.com, www.21centurysocialism.com, and www.narconews.com. He will be assisted by Ledys Navas, a long-time Venezuelan community leader and an accomplished musician. FACDIS director Jack Hammersmith and Assistant Director Gretchen Peterec will also accompany the group.

What Will Teachers Receive?

The trip includes round-trip economy flight from Washington Dulles International Airport to Caracas, airport transfers, lodging, bus transportation, most meals, entrance fees and guides, and regular education activities. Participants are asked to contribute \$600 toward the trip; FACDIS will pay the remainder, approximately \$1,600. Please see attached for proposed itinerary.

What are Costs to Teachers?

- Participants are asked to pay \$200 upon acceptance towards the \$600 total contribution for the trip, \$100 of which is a non-refundable registration/administrative fee. The \$200 deposit is due **April 1**. The balance (\$400) will be due by **May 1** (check made payable to West Virginia University).
- Three hours of professional development graduate credit will be available through West Virginia University, for a cost to teacher of \$130.00 for the three hours.
- Participants must have a valid passport.
- Participants must purchase international health insurance through the West Virginia University Office of International Programs. Further information on the insurance will be provided in the acceptance packet. Although costs have not been confirmed, it is likely to be less than \$50.

In addition, teachers must cover costs of transportation to/from Washington Dulles International

Airport, at least two dinners, optional tour activities and other personal costs.

Selection of Participants:

In the very likely event that more applications are received than can be accepted, the personal statements/essays will be important factors in the final selection process. You may want to discuss: how your experience in Venezuela will likely affect your classes (be as specific as possible); evidence of any teaching experiences which you wish to share (e.g., teaching awards); and how your professional goals and values might be fulfilled by this opportunity. Teachers who have met their past academic responsibilities with FACDIS will be given additional consideration.

Participation Requirements:

Participants who are selected will be required to complete a confidential health form and submit a physician's statement, requirements of the WVU Office of International Programs through which our program now operates for foreign travel. Also required will be the purchase of international insurance through the WVU OIP at minimal cost (information incomplete but likely to be less than \$50).

Course Requirements:

As a follow-up to the trip, teachers will be required to submit lesson plans for a curriculum unit on Venezuela, and should teach it in their classes as appropriate during the year. Lesson plans should cover a minimum of 5-7 regular class periods. Lesson plans will be due in the FACDIS Office by **September 30, 2008.**

Responsibility:

West Virginia University (WVU) and FACDIS serve only to assist in arranging travel for its participating constituents and does not in any way represent or act as agent for transportation carriers and other suppliers of services connected with this tour. Travel and services are subject only to the terms and conditions under which such accommodations, services and transportation are offered or provided, and WVU and National Travel Service, our travel agent, are not liable for any injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or other irregularity which may be caused by the defect or any vehicle or the negligence or default of any company or person engaged in carrying out or performing any of the services involved. Additionally, responsibility is not accepted for losses or expenses caused by sickness, weather, strikes, wars, natural disasters, or other such causes. All services and accommodations are subject to the laws of the country in which they are provided. WVU and National Travel reserve the right to change the published itinerary whenever, in their sole judgment, conditions warrant, or if they deem it necessary for the comfort, convenience, or safety of the tour participants. They also reserve the right to decline to accept any person as a member of the tour or to require any participant to withdraw from the tour at any time, when such action is determined by the appropriate tour leader to be in the best interests of the health, safety, and general welfare of the tour group or of the individual participants. National Travel also reserves the right to cancel any tour prior to departure for any reason, included, but not limited to tours based on a minimum number of participants.

Applicants will be notified as soon as possible after the deadline of their acceptance into the trip, and will then need to send the payment of \$200 (check made payable to West Virginia University) TO BE RECEIVED in our office by April 1, 2008. The balance (\$400) to be received in our office by May 1, 2008

FACDIS International Studies Summer Institutes for Teachers

"Venezuela: Behind the Headlines"

June 29 - July 10, 2008

Sunday, June 29: Arrival in Caracas, transfer to the Hotel Avila

Monday, June 30: A day of orientation to Venezuela. This would be a kind of classroom day with presentations on various aspects of Venezuelan history and the current situation with speakers to cover such topics as 21st century socialism, petroleum, human rights, U.S. involvement in Venezuela, co-operatives, etc. If possible, will also include a leader from the opposition to the present government of Hugo Chavez.

Tuesday, July 1: A tour of historical and cultural sight in Caracas, including a huge mural depicting the history of Venezuela, the birth place of Simon Bolivar, Plaza Bolivar, the Capitol, Puente Llaguno (where the 2002 coup against Chavez had its center of conflict), the Panteon (where Bolivar and other Venezuelan leaders are buried), the fine arts area. Evening in El Hatillo, a quaint and popular weekend tourist area with many restaurants, art galleries, etc. Stay again at Hotel Avila.

Wednesday, July 2: Travel to Barquisimeto; brief tour of the center (a contrast to Caracas) and a cultural event in the late afternoon and possibly a visit to a Robinson or Ribas education "mission." Stay at the Hotel Principe in Barquisimeto.

Thursday, July 3: Visit a neighborhood center with a locally controlled radio station, TV station and cyber-center. Then travel to Sanare and visit a women's co-op and learn about the educational programs in the Monte Carmelo area. Lodging at the El Cerrito Posada in Sanare.

Friday, July 4: In the morning visit La Pastora high school, a small innovative public high school in a coffee community. In the afternoon visit a local agricultural cooperative which has become a teaching center for organic farming methods. Stay at El Cerrito Posada in Sanare.

Saturday, July 5: This is Independence Day in Venezuela. There may be activities in Sanare on this day, but another option will be to visit and to take a hike in the cloud forest of Yacambu National Park in the beautiful Andes mountains of this area. Stay at El Cerrito Posada in Sanare.

Sunday, July 6: Return to Caracas, stopping at an outdoor shopping area between Sanare and Barquisimeto, where local artisans display their crafts. Lodging at the Hotel Avila.

Monday, July 7: Visits to one or two Caracas barrios and to the Fabricio Ojeda Endogenous Center (an abandoned gasoline refueling plant that has been turned into a neighborhood center with clothing and shoe co-operatives, a clinic, subsidized food store, etc.). In the evening, visit one of Caracas' luxury shopping centers. Stay at Hotel Avila.

Tuesday, July 8: Travel to Barlovento, a center of descendants of former enslaved Afro-Venezuelans. Visit the only Afro-Venezuelan university and a cacao plantation where four generations of Afro-Venezuelans live. Learn how chocolate is produced and visit a new cacao processing plant run by the community. In the late afternoon watch a spectacular aerial display of birds at La Laguna de Tacarigua. Lodging at the Hotel Barlovento in Higuerote.

Wednesday, July 9: A morning and early afternoon at the beach for relaxation and reflection, and then returning to Caracas and the Hotel Avila for supper and final debriefing.

Thursday, July 10: Return to the United States.